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VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

BY

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ILLUSTRATED BY

HARRIET O'BRIEN



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PREFACE

After repeated requests from numerous teachers, I have consented to publish in book form the following verses which have appeared in *The North American Teacher* during the past three or four years.

If these verses will serve in any way to promote the cause of God and of country, my most sanguine hopes will be realized.

—M.C.A.



A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

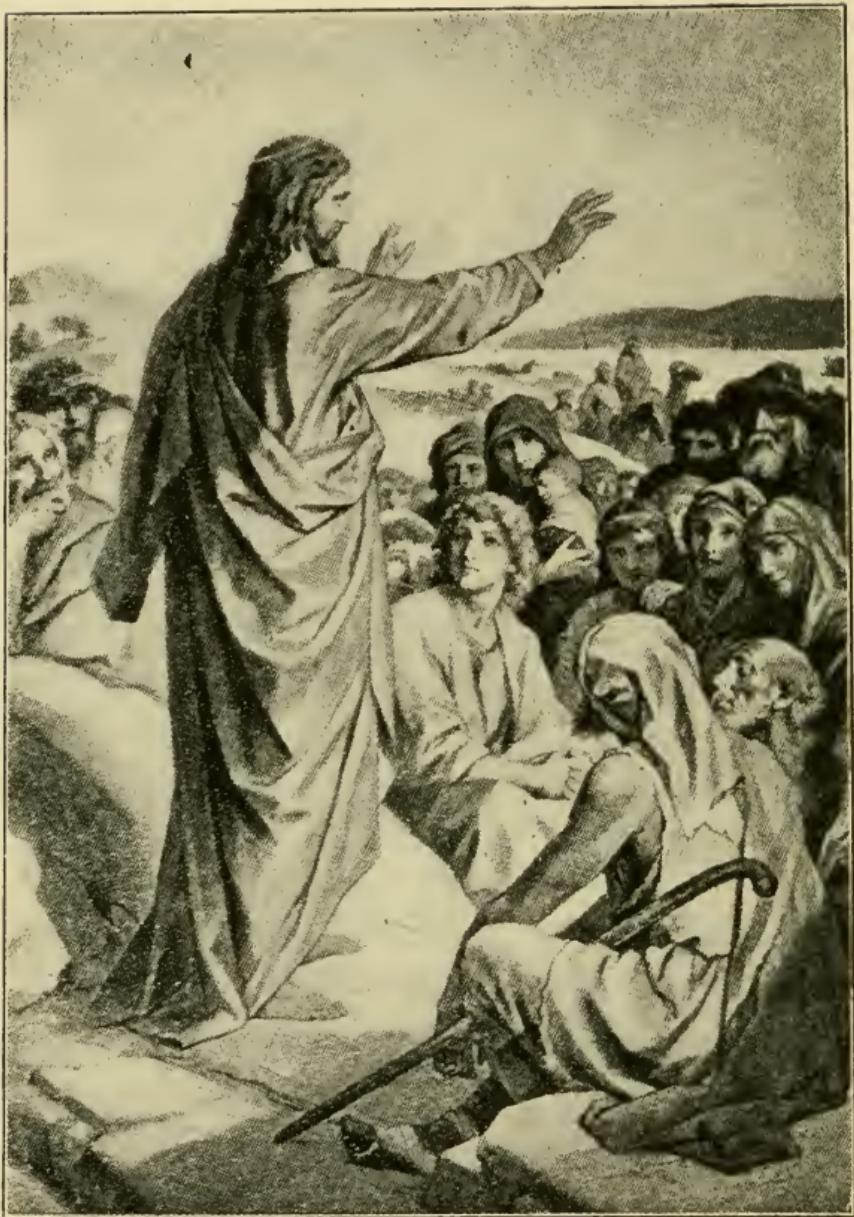
VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

Guarding the emblem of Christian salvation,
 Liberty's banner in triumph doth wave,
Showing the minions of intolerance
 Justice presides in the Land of the Brave.

Freemen have rights that shall live through the
 ages
Where these two emblems of happiness
 dwell;
Calvary's Cross thrills both children and sages;
 Liberty's ensign sounds Tyranny's knell.

Long may these lights of our fond veneration
 Brighten the pathway of Freedom's domain;
Long may the Cross and the Flag of our nation
 Harbor all men under Liberty's reign!



SERMON ON THE MOUNT (Hofmann)

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

THE MASTER AND THE TEACHER

Upon yon verdant mound, behold the Master
stands

Amid the circling throng — the sons of many
lands.

The magic of His words — their potency, their
grace —

Thrills every human heart within that hallowed
place.

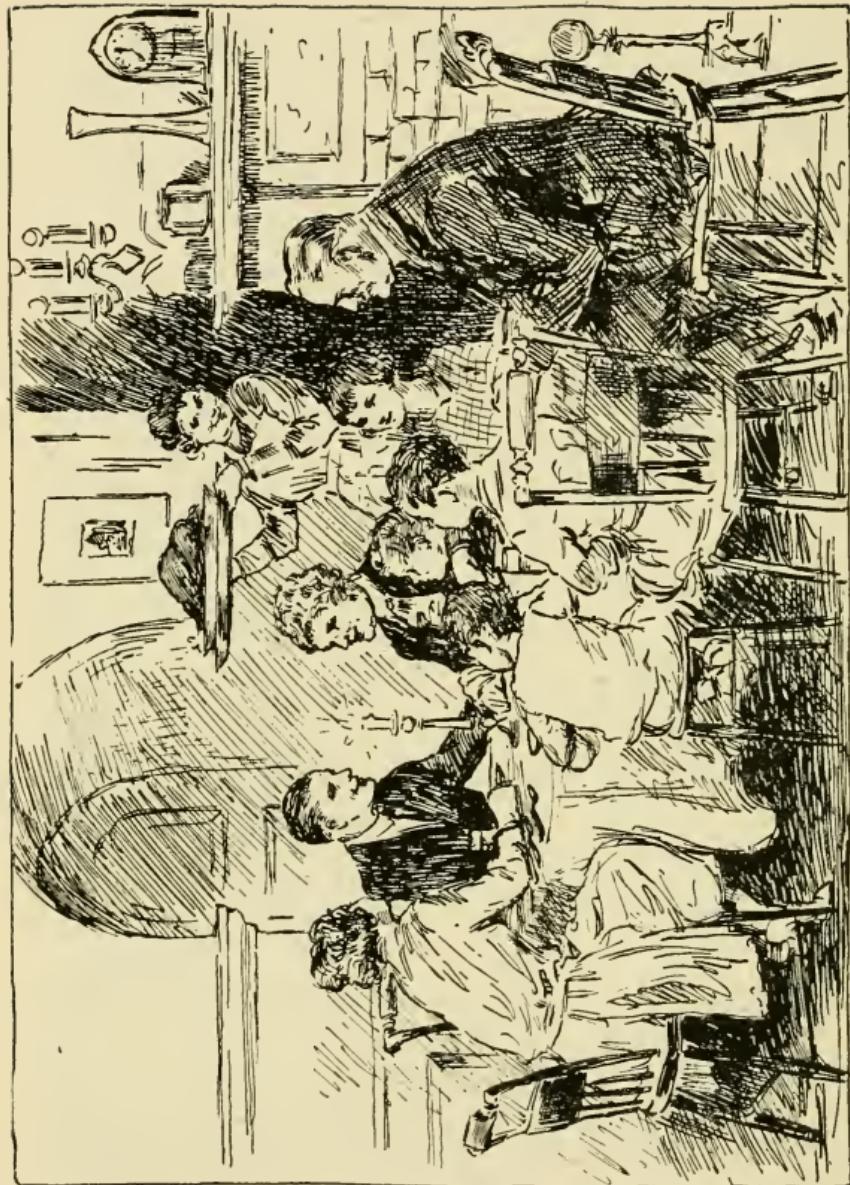
E'en as the Master mild, the zealous teacher
stands

To mold the growing mind, to train both heart
and hands.

She leads each tender soul with true maternal
grace

Along the devious paths which knowledge doth
embrace.

THANKSGIVING DAY



THANKSGIVING EVE

The evening shades are drawing nigh
The wind is keen and cold;
The flocks that grazed upon the plain
Are safe within the fold.

Around the joyous, happy hearth
The children meet once more,
To praise and thank the Lord of love
For His abundant store.

For favors showered upon this world,
Warm hearts in prayer they raise:
They fill the atmosphere of heaven
With canticles of praise.

Thrice-blest the home wherein this feast
Is kept with old accord:
Thrice-blest the land where brave hearts kneel
To thank our gracious Lord.



APPARITION OF THE SHEPHERDS (*Plockhorst*)

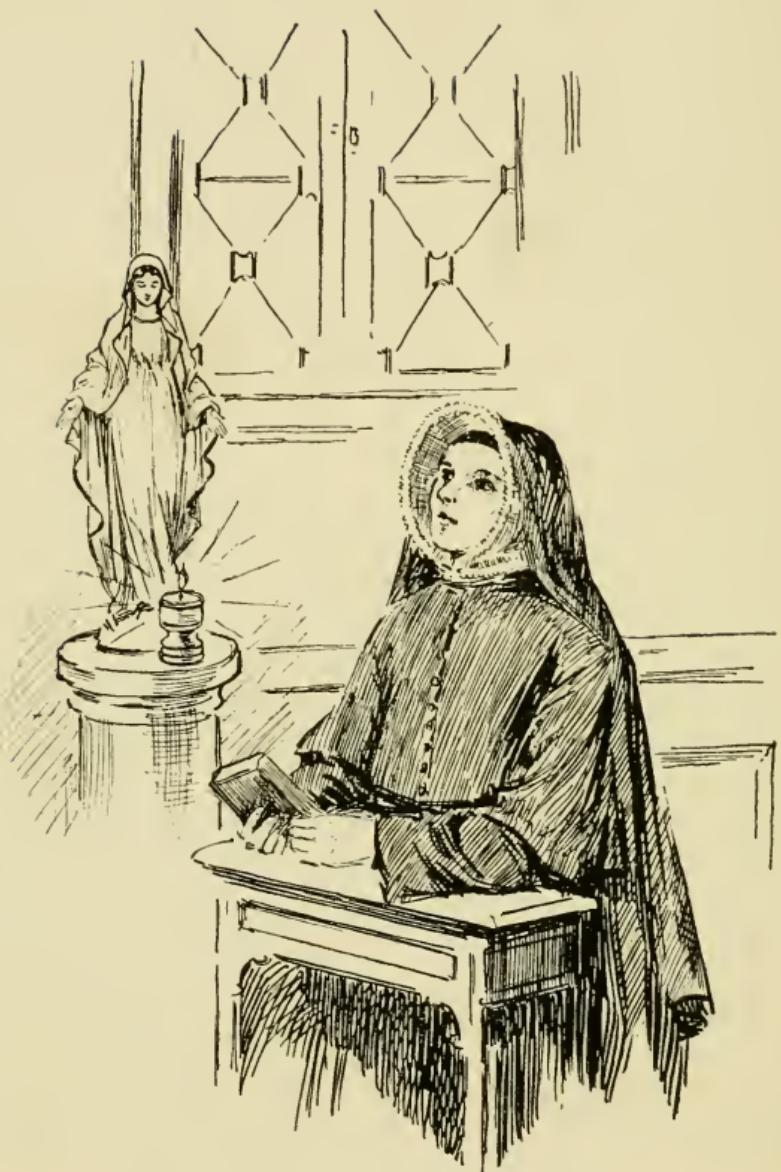
CHRISTMAS EVE

While Night with her purple mantle
 Cast a pall on the silent Earth,
A light from the heavenly mansion
 Shone forth at the Saviour's birth.

And the angels in heaven chanted
 Their anthems of peace and good-will,
As the faithful shepherds hastened
 Their vows of love to fulfil.

They feasted their eyes on the Saviour,
 As He lay in the manger mild,
And they offered their hearts so tender
 To Mary's immaculate Child.

With the sterling faith of the shepherds,
 When they heard the angelic song,
Let us offer the new-born Saviour
 A love everlasting and strong !



THINKING OF THE NEW YEAR

THE NEW YEAR

As I stand at the brink of the coming year,
And look back on the year gone by,
A current of thought doth illumine my mind,
Like a star in yon darkling sky.

I can see the dim Past as if yesterday :
The deeds that have fretted my life
Are so pictured with all their vivid appeal
That they fill my faint heart with strife.

But away with the thoughts of the days now past !
Let the mercy of God appear ;
Let me think of the Future's eternal joy,
And the bliss that I fain were here !

O the promising days of the coming year !
May they gladden our hearts so true ;
May they plenish our souls with the love of God,
Bringing heavenly peace anew !



WASHINGTON (*Faed*)

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

WASHINGTON

Brave scion of a noble race,
Endowed with Nature's strength and grace,
With pride we think of thee.
Thy hands were raised in Freedom's cause,
To crush the Tyrant's unjust laws
And give us liberty.

Great leader of that warrior band
That thrust the Tyrant from our land,
With joy we honor thee.
Thy name shall live in History's page
To thrill brave men of every age
Who seek fair Liberty.

The teeming fields, the forest glades,
The peaceful bowers, the sylvan shades,
Proclaim thy victory.
A noble land where brave men dwell
Inspired by Freedom's magic spell,
Thy monument shall be.



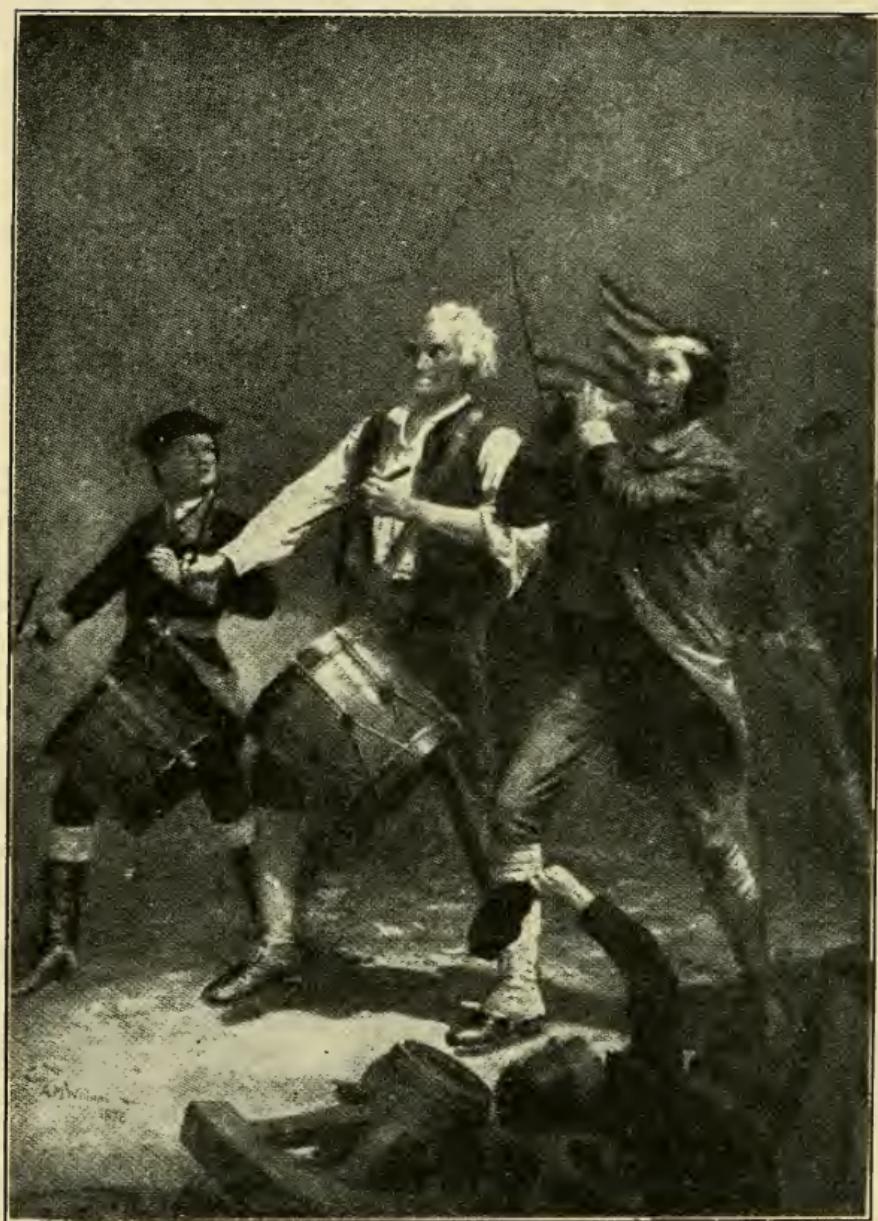
REPOSE IN EGYPT (*Plockhorst*)

SAINT JOSEPH

Pure as the snowflakes that cover the mountain,
Fair as the lily that floats on the stream,
Meek as the white dove that sips at the fountain,
Joseph appears in the bright morning beam.

Gaze on his visage so strongly appealing;
Note the expression so heavenly fair;
See our dear Patron in ecstasy kneeling;
List, O my child, to the theme of his prayer.

“Father in heaven, I humbly implore Thee,
Pity Thy children so sorely opprest;
Give them the wisdom to love and adore Thee,
Lead them in time to Thy mansions of rest.”



THE SPIRIT OF '76 (*Willard*)

THE PATRIOT

A heart that is constantly burning,
A fervor that never grows cold,
A love ever generous and yearning,
Are found in the patriot's mold.

With courage he marches to battle,
And enters the dank field of strife;
For the sake of his country and honor
He willingly offers his life.

In peace, he is ever devoted
To the high cause of justice and truth ;
The fire of his youthful emotion
Inspires the less militant youth.

Then honor the patriot's devotion,
And praise him with undying breath ;
Inspired by his noble example,
March onward to victory or death !



THE MADONNA AT PRAYER (*Sassoferrato*)

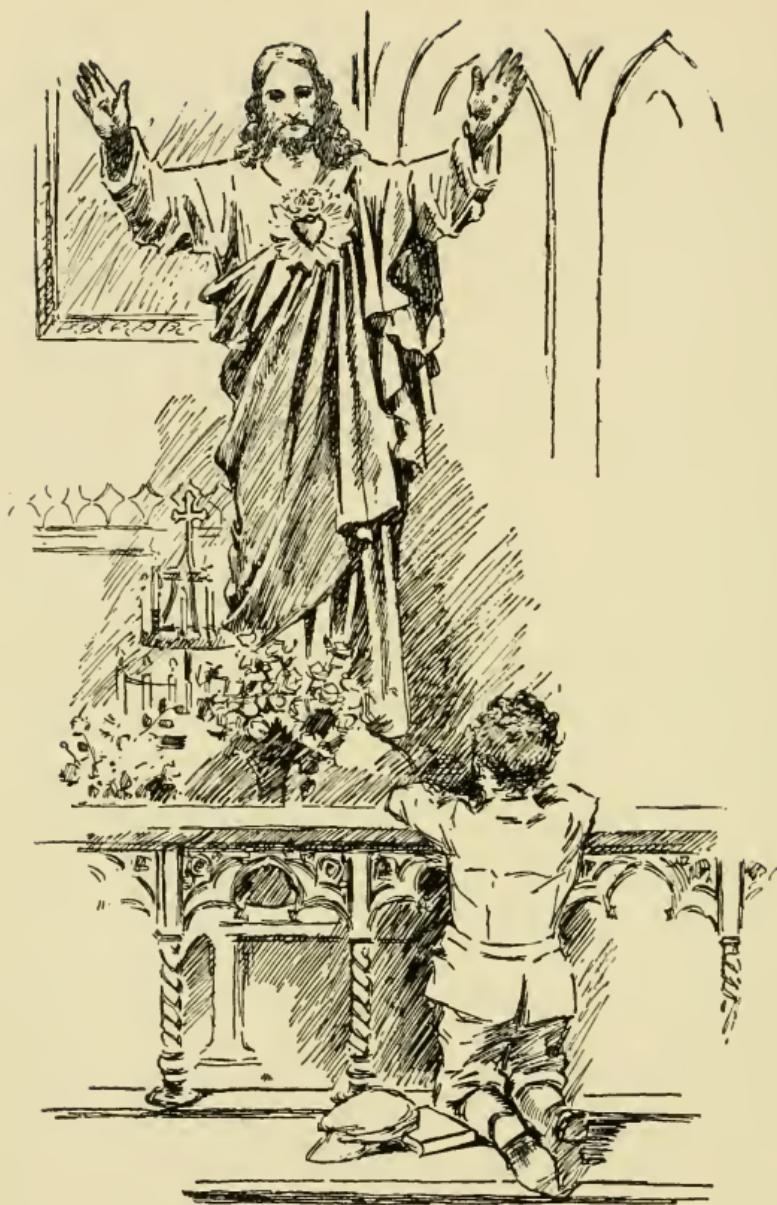
THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN

Fairest handmaid of the Lord,
Fashioned after Heaven's accord,
Meeker than the snow-white dove,
Brimming o'er with God's pure love!

Would I were a song-bird free
Caroling in ecstasy,
I should hymn a fitting lay
To the spotless Queen of May.

Every note that I should sing
Would to thee great pleasance bring,
And 'twould touch with magic art
The nerve-strings of the Sacred Heart.

When I leave this vale of tears
Fraught with discontent and fears,
Virgin fair, be thou my guide,
Lead me to the Saviour's side.



PRAYING TO THE SACRED HEART

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Thrice-generous font of love divine,
Thy brilliant beauties far outshine
Fair Nature's bower.

Within Thy Heart no limits dwell;
No living words can ever tell
Thy wondrous power.

Ah, how that Heart has bled for me,
Amid the hills of Calvary
At day's decline!

My heart in humble rapture burns,
Awed by Thy sacrifice, and yearns
For things divine.

Within the bounds of Thy pure Heart
There let me rest in peace, apart
From worldly strife;
Till Time proclaims Life's setting sun,
And God reveals the deeds well done
In mortal life.



BEFORE THE CRIB

A CHRISTMAS WISH

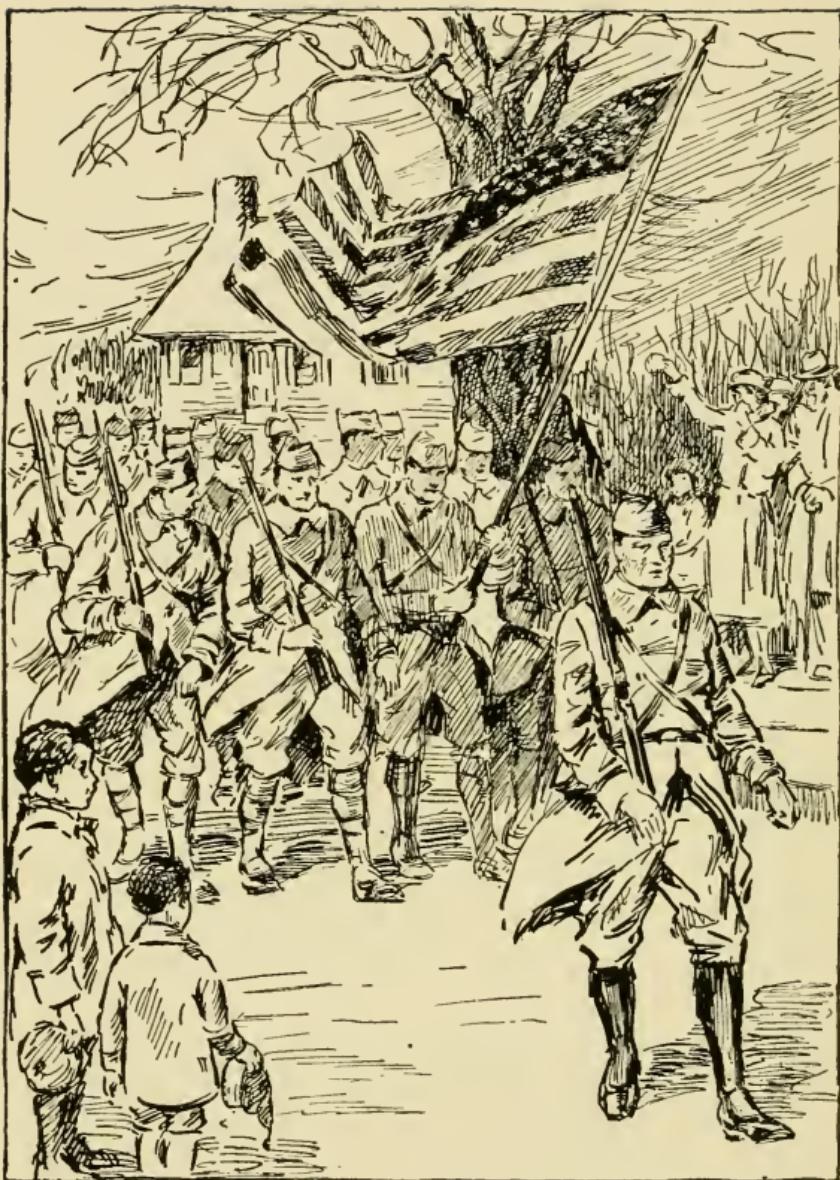
Oh, take me in fancy to Judah's plain !

Let me dream of the long ago,
When the shepherds tended their timorous flocks
By the moonlight so pale and low.

Let me listen enthralled to angel choirs
As they chant their paens of praise,
While Jesus of Nazareth visits the earth
To brighten and gladden our days.

Let me hasten this eve to the manger crib
That cradles the Infant so fair ;
Let me voice the love of a grateful heart
With an ardent and fervent prayer.

For thus will my soul overflow with joy,
And my thoughts to heaven arise :
Let me vow to follow the Master's path
Till I meet Him in Paradise !



THE DRAFT OF 1917

OUR COUNTRY'S CALL*

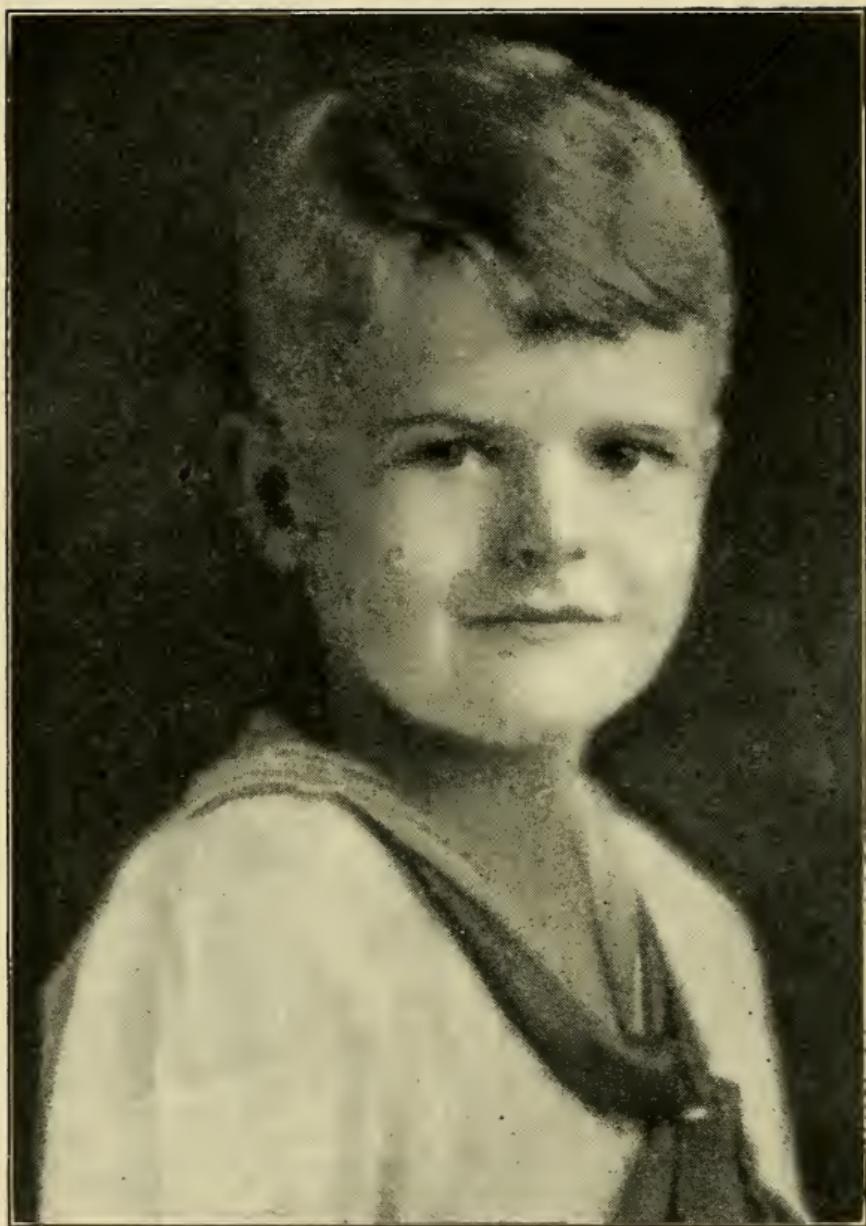
Lovers of Freedom, awake from base slumber;
List to the clanging of Tyranny's chains:
Liberty calls you to follow her standard;
Base is the ingrate who fears or refrains.

Gaze on yon banner with ardent devotion;
Know that it shelters the brave and the free;
Does it not stand for the voice of the people?
Does it not lend inspiration to thee?

Better to breathe the pure air of a freeman;
Better to fight for our God and our fanes;
Better to die in defense of Old Glory;
Better, far better, than Slavery's chains.

Go forth to battle, your hearts steeled with ardor;
Fight for your homes and the land of your birth;
Fling to the dust the opponents of Freedom,
Drive out oppression, bring God's peace to earth!

*The Draft of 1917.



WILLIAM FRANCIS HICKEY (*Jordon*)

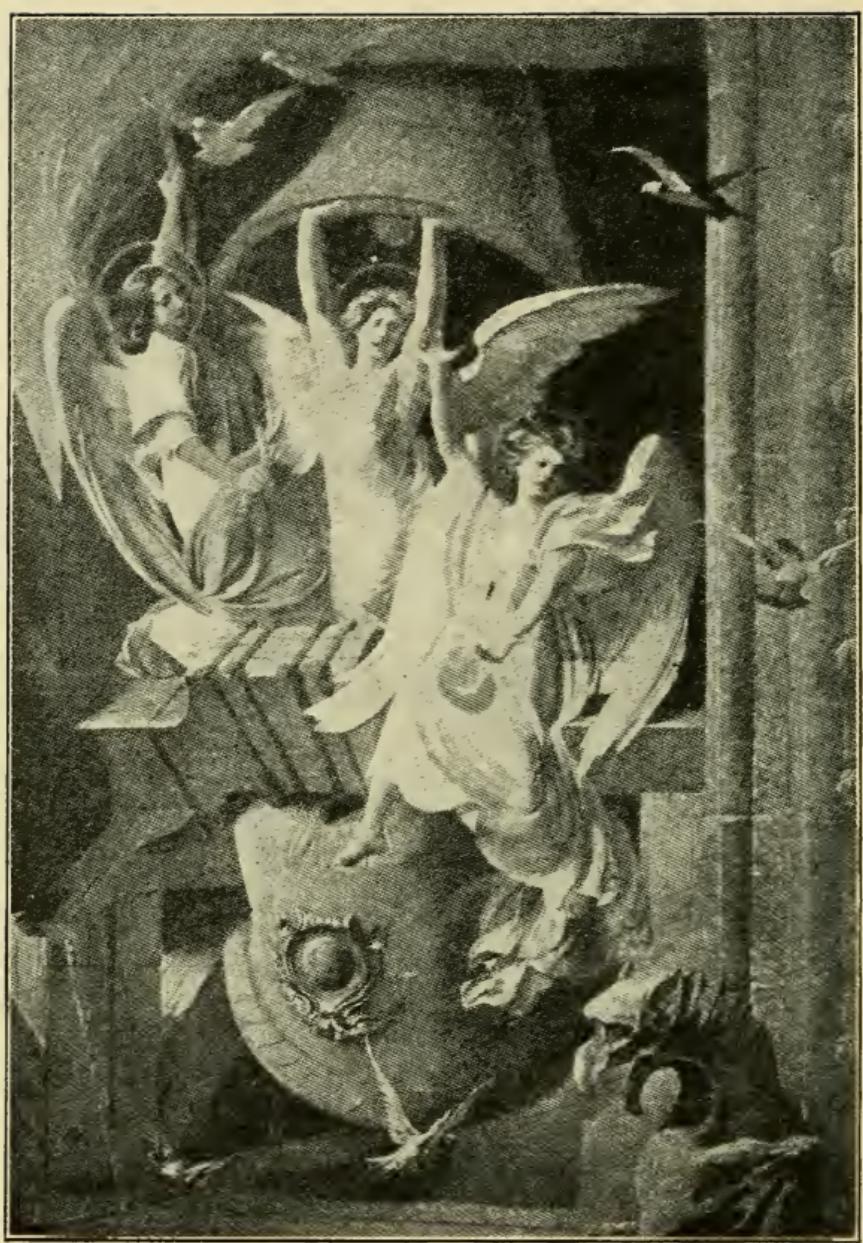
BILLY

Sweet little chap with eyes of blue,
The love of my heart goes out to you.
You make me think of the days gone by
When tiny as you are now was I.

Does teacher make you toe the line?
And do you go to class at nine?
Or does she keep you after school
To learn by heart some crazy rule?

“She keeps us busy with lots of things:
She smiles, she talks, she laughs, she sings.
She tells us stories of other boys
Who worked and played with wondrous
toys.”

Dear little chap with eyes of blue,
I am so glad that she’s kind to you.
Study for her — learn all you can,—
You will be glad when you are a man.



NEW YEAR'S CHIMES (*Blashfield*)

TIME'S NATAL DAY

The blare of trumpets rends the air,
And sweet bells peal and play,
When Father Time in merry mood
Proclaims his natal day.

He comes, the harbinger of peace,
Atwixt the night and day,
To bid mankind the joys of Christ —
The Life, the Truth, the Way.

Let Gratitude command our hearts ;
Let Faith inspire our will ;
Let Music roll from soul to soul ;
Let Prayer the heavens fill !



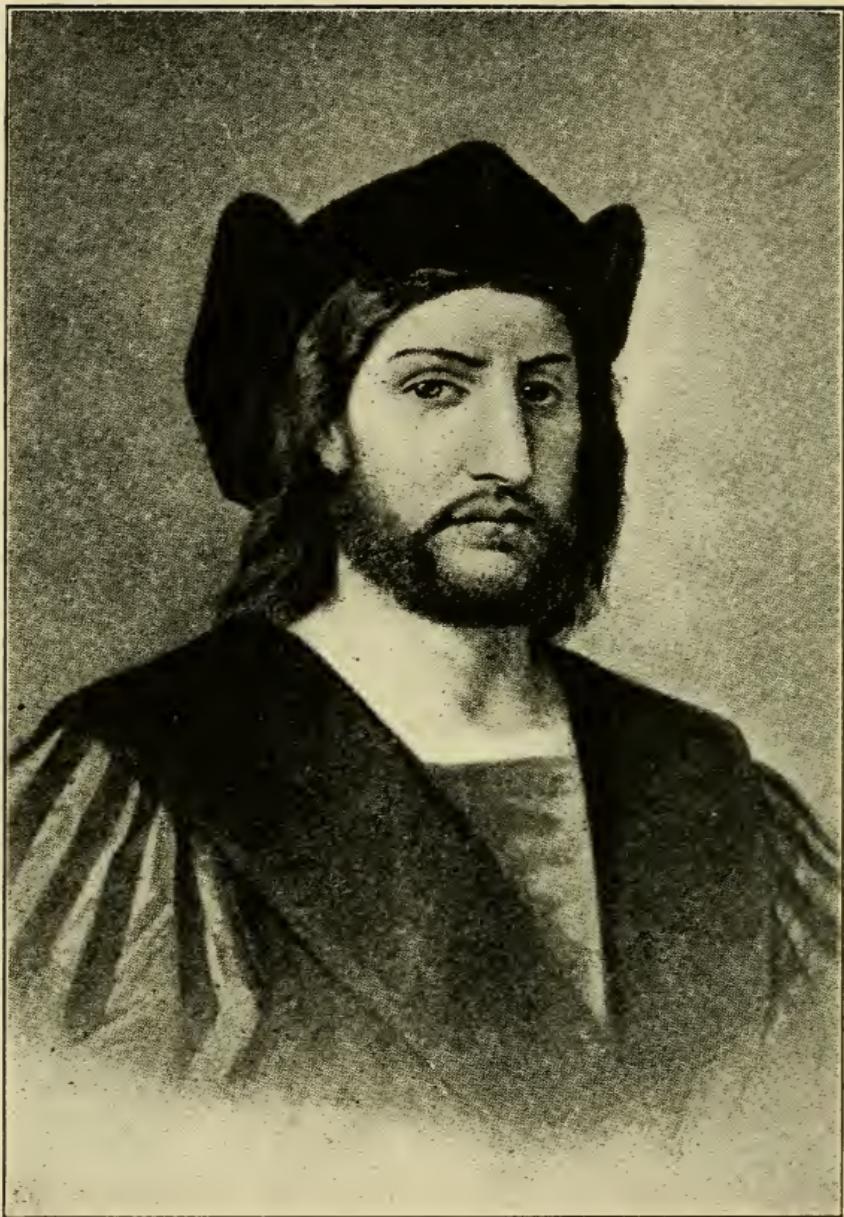
A TEACHER AND HER CLASS

THE TEACHER

O what a store of magic power
 Lies dormant in each child,
Till wakened by the teacher's voice,
 So potent, kind and mild!

Thrice-blessèd her unselfish work!
 There's nothing in Life's span
That's greater than the power she wields
 In educating man.

Perform thy noble mission well!
 Let Love e'er guide thy heart!
Then yearning minds will grow apace
 In Science and in Art.



COLUMBUS (*Perry Pictures*)

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

COLUMBUS

Hail to Columbus, a genius so rare,
Whose action was prefaced by purposeful
prayer.

Praise the brave seaman who brought to our
shore

Tidings of Jesus, true Light evermore.

Faith was the virtue that gave to his thought
Power to inspire the fair queen whom he sought.
Hope was the spirit commanding his heart ;
Love was the beacon that lighted his chart.

His was the voice that encouraged his crew
To plough the deep, perilous caverns of blue.
His was the spirit that filled with good cheer
The hearts of his men who had yielded to fear.

Brave of the bravest, a genius so true !
When shall we duly appreciate you ?
Years have rolled by since you came to our land,
Yet Time hasn't given the Fame you demand.



A HEART TO HEART CONFERENCE

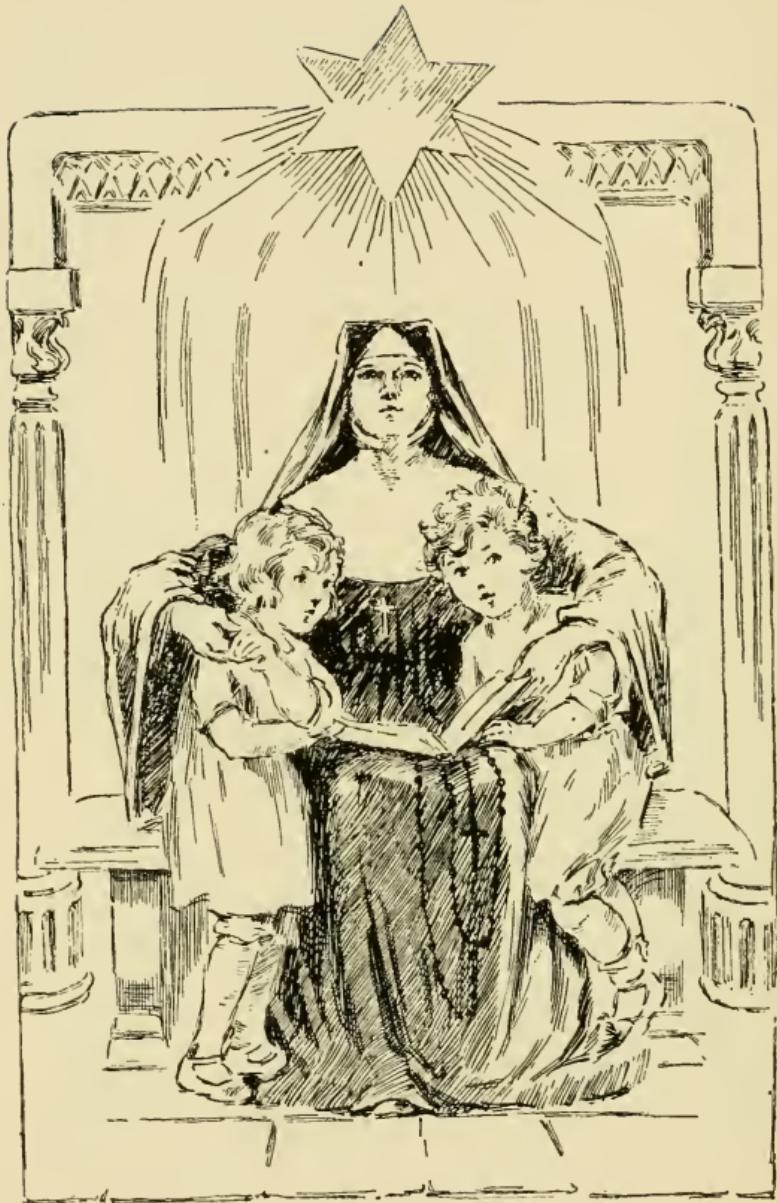
A NUN'S REPLY

"Why dost thou toil so zealously
And never seem to tire?
Why is thy heart aflame with love?
What is thy soul's desire?"

"Ah! I have wed a sacred cause;
I need no master's rod;
My inmost heart's desire is this:
'To do the will of God.'

"I see in every little one
A child almost divine,
And strive to form his growing mind
Unto the Lord's design."

"O noble nun! thy deeds shall be
A monument sublime
In God's eternal home of bliss
Through never-ending time."



THE NOBLENESS OF TEACHING

THE TEACHER'S ART

The sculptor may chisel cold marble
With genius surpassingly rare:
The painter may feature his canvas
With beauty exquisitely fair.

But what are all these arts to teaching
That illumines the depths of a soul,
That arouses the mind into action,
That leads us to God's highest goal!

Strive on in your noble profession,
Ye teachers of childhood and youth;
May the Master from Nazareth guide you
In teaching the Way and the Truth!



MAKING A RESOLUTION

A NUN'S RESOLUTION

'Mid the stillness of the chapel
As the Old Year neared its end,
I was thinking of the Saviour
Who for me His life did spend.

Then a light from heaven illumined
The dark path which Jesus trod,
And I felt a heavenly impulse
To draw nearer to my God.

So I formed a resolution,
One that means continual strife,
"I will follow Thee, dear Jesus,
Every moment of my life.

"I will labor in Thy vineyard
Till I hear Thy welcome call,
'Come, ye blessed of my Father,
Rest within the Banquet Hall.' "



THE ANNUNCIATION (*Bouguereau*)

THE ANNUNCIATION

In Nazareth of Galilee,
 Built on a mountain's breast,
An angel to a Virgin came
 With tidings doubly blest.

“Fear not, O Mary, full of grace,
 The message that I bring:
By power divine thou shalt conceive
 Jesus, the new-born King.”

“But how can this e'er come to pass?”
Inquired Judea's maid.
“The power of God is infinite;
 Ah, be ye not afraid!”

“Behold the handmaid of the Lord,”
Exclaimed the Virgin mild.
Then Jesus Christ incarnate came
 To Mary undefiled.



MARY EDNA HICKEY (*Jordon*)

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

MARY

Golden locks and eyes of blue,
Happy smile and love so true,
Winsome ways that ne'er depart,
She's the sunshine of my heart.

Full of life and fair to view,
Handsome face and dimples, too;
When she plays just like a boy,
She's a precious mine of joy.

She's so lively when at school,
Sometimes even breaks the rule;
Smooths away the teacher's frown,
When she makes things upside down.

Still withal she's so polite,
Always tries to do what's right.
If this charming child you knew,
You would love her as I do.



THE MINUTE MAN (*French*)

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

LEXINGTON AND CONCORD*

Thrice-hallowed spots, where freemen fell
Amid the blaze of shot and shell,

Your glory ne'er shall fade.

Your sons went forth in chivalry
To light the torch of Liberty
With spirits undismayed.

We honor this devoted band
Who gave their lives for their loved land
That Freedom should prevail.
Such deeds of glory thrill the heart
And say, "Go thou, and do thy part,
Know no such word as fail!"

The memory of these Minute Men
Shall ever live in freemen's ken
Till Time shall be no more.
God fill our land with patriots true
Who'll risk their lives and fortunes, too,
Like these brave men of yore!

*April 19, 1775.



ST. JOAN OF ARC (*Ingres*)

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

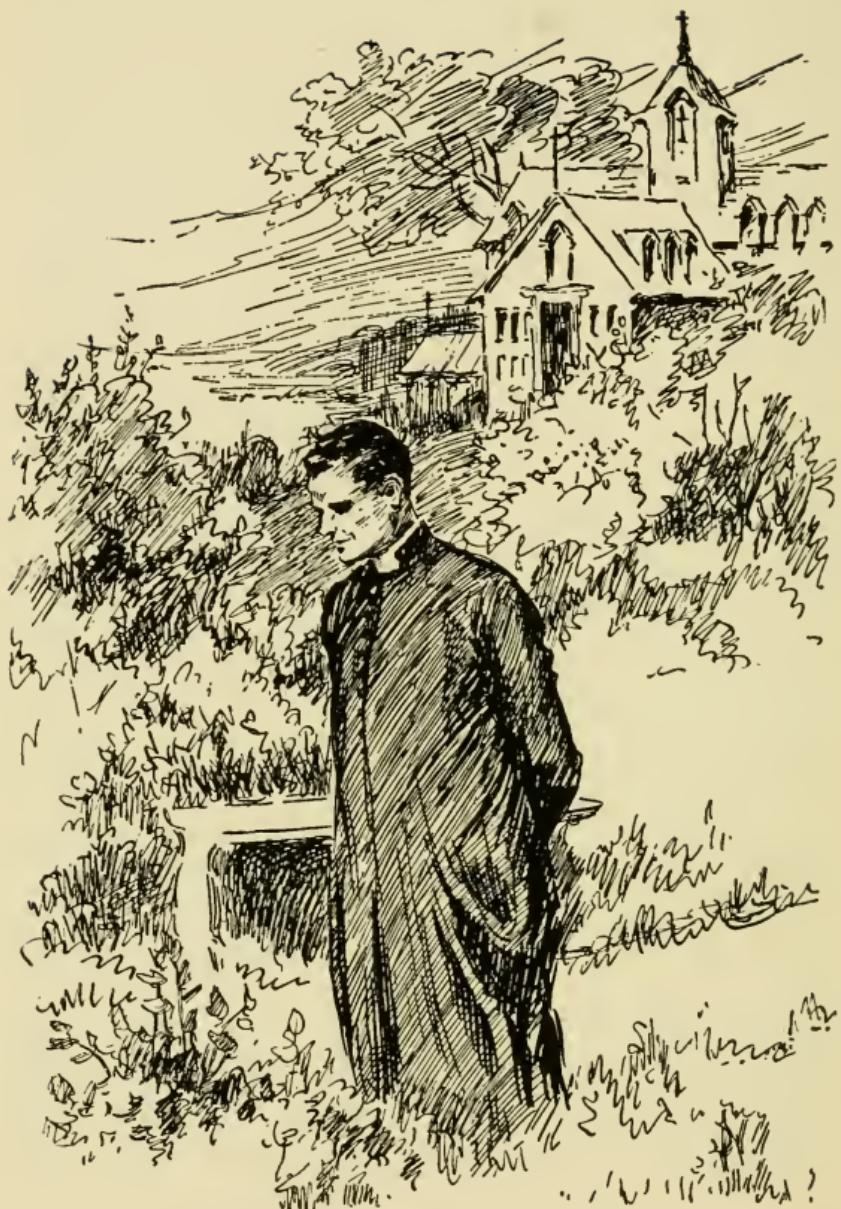
SAINT JOAN OF ARC

Fair saint of France! Thy tragic death
Has forced the trembling hand of Time
To spread on History's vivid page
The record of a life sublime.

Thy love for thy fair motherland
Led thee to offer thy young life
Unto that prince who led the French
Amid the wrack of War's dread strife.

When Victory crowned thy efforts grand,
When Failure made the Briton quake,
Base, envious men with perjured lips
Condemned thee, martyred, to the stake.

Yet now our hearts with joy are filled,
For Truth has brought thee deathless fame,
And Christ the Lord has placed His seal
Upon thy ever-glorious name.



DEEP MEDITATION

SPIRITUAL RETREAT

I've visited Calvary's Mount
And followed the way Jesus trod :
I've pictured the Passion of Christ
To draw my soul nearer to God.

I've thought of His marvelous love,
The wondrous effect of His grace ;
I've garnered my mind with ideas
That Satan can never efface.

I feel like a warrior of old
Inspired by Jehovah above ;
My heart is abundantly stored
With promptings of heavenly love.



LAYING DOWN THE LAW

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

A WORD TO TEACHERS

List unto me, ye master-minds
Whose deeds are crowned with victory,
What is the aim of all thy work?
Does it build for eternity?

Dost thou develop fine physique
To do and dare a patriot's part?
Dost thou arouse the dormant mind
That opens wide the yearning heart?

O dost thou cultivate the soul
That gives to man his destiny?
And do thy thoughts responsive strike
A chord that sings for verity?

Yea, thou hast trained these youthful minds
With genius ever wise and sage:
And all too soon the hands of Time
Shall trace thy deeds on History's page.



CHARLES ANTHONY AUSTIN (*Bachrach*)

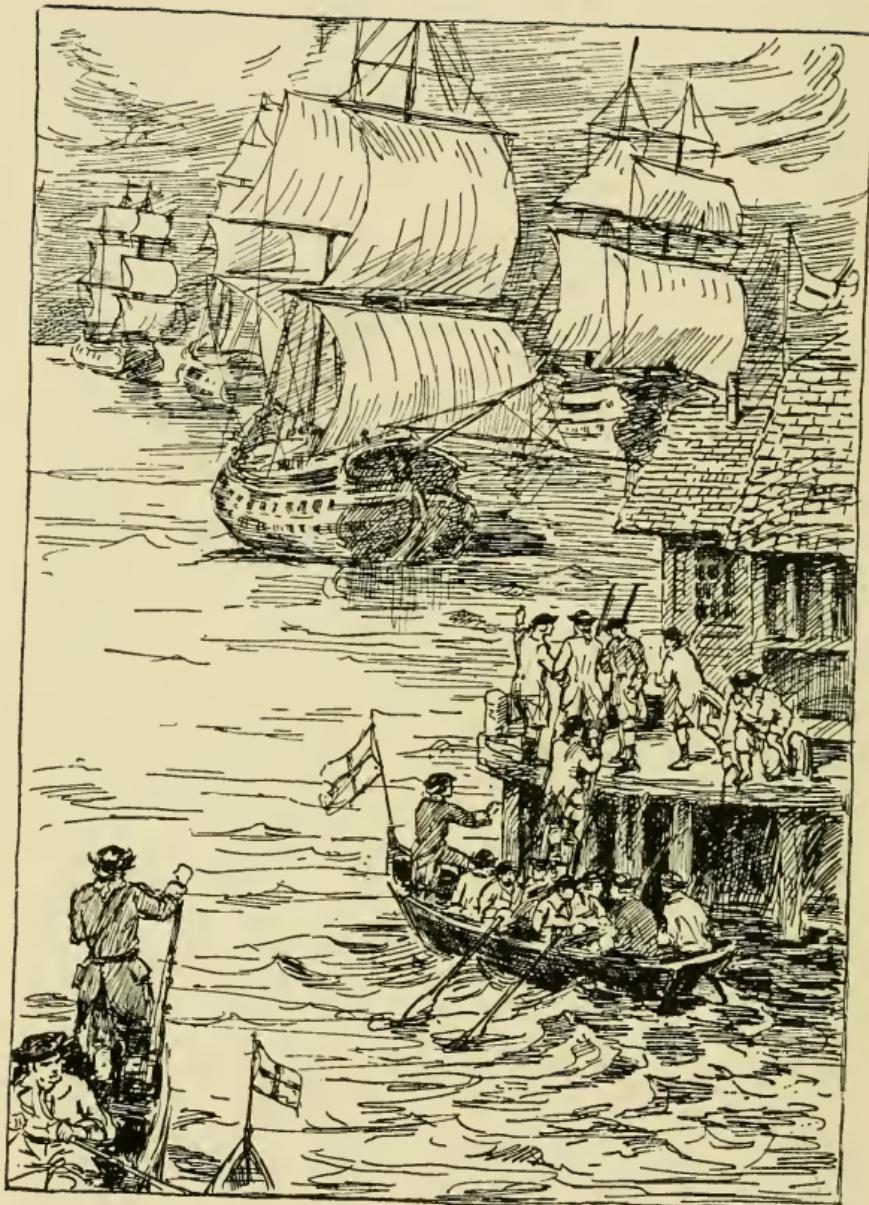
VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

CHARLIE

A winsome boy
Brimming with joy
Has won this heart of mine.
His ways so wise,
His sparkling eyes,
Seem like a thing divine.

His love so true
Doth oft renew
The joys that fill the day.
His winning smile
Bereft of guile
Doth drive dull care away.

I love to see
In childish glee
This really charming boy,
Who brings to me
Love's ecstasy,—
A gift without alloy.



THE EVACUATION OF BOSTON

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

EVACUATION DAY

March 17

All hail the day when Briton's hosts
Were forced to leave brave Boston's coasts:
When all the power of selfish Might
Could not withstand the arms of Right.

That was a proud and glorious day
Which brought to naught the Tyrant's sway;
Which fanned the flame of liberty
In hearts that throbbed with chivalry.

Give honor to that patriot band
Whose love of home and native land
shall live for aye in History's page
o be our glorious heritage.



REMEMBERING THE DEAD

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

DECORATION DAY

The heroes who have fought and died
To stem Oppression's rising tide

Were patriots to the core.

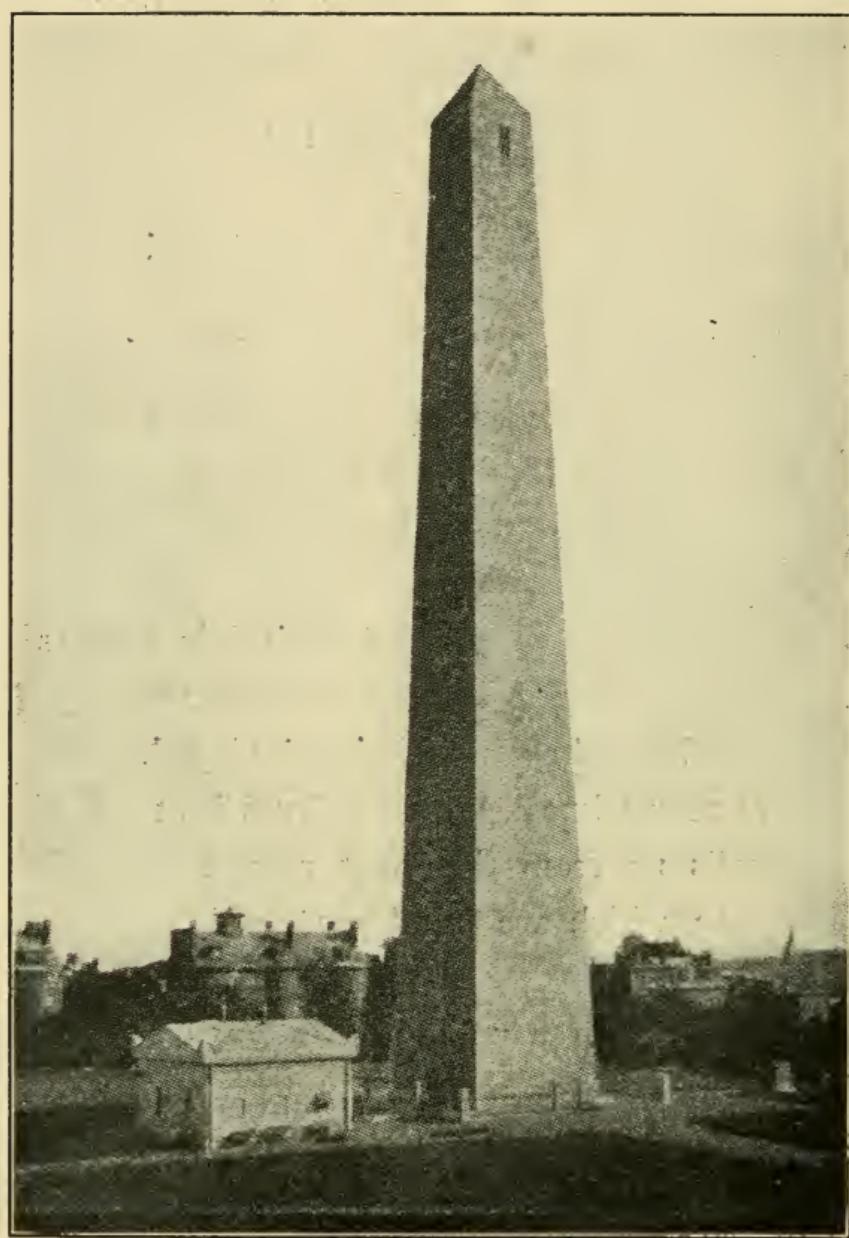
Their valiant deeds in Freedom's name
Have brought to them a priceless fame
That rings from shore to shore.

Their graves we garland with fair flowers
That grew amid the sylvan bowers
Where they in childhood played.

And as we kneel, the soft drum beat
Recalls us from the quiet retreat
In which we humbly prayed.

God bless these noble-hearted men,
And keep their memory in our ken,
To guide our steps alway.

The golden glories that they've won
Are brighter than the rising sun
That ushers in the day.



BUNKER HILL (*Perry Pictures*)

BUNKER HILL

June 17

What vivid thoughts impress the mind!

And how the heart doth thrill!

When Time recalls the dauntless deeds

That hallow Bunker Hill.

Oh, for the heart of Prescott brave!

For Warren's noble zeal!

What patriot fire inspired these men

To face the Tyrant's steel!

In spite of British shot and shell

For hours the contest sped,

Till many a gallant colonist

Was numbered with the dead.

Though humbled by superior force

In that momentous fight,

That feat proclaimed to freemen brave

The mastery of their might.



THE IDEAL TEACHER (*Plockhorst*)

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

THE IDEAL TEACHER

O would that my tongue could utter
A melody half as sweet
As the words that fell from the Saviour
When the children knelt at His feet!

He taught them in ways so striking
With a vision beyond compare,
That the children were wrapt in attention
Like an angel choir at prayer.

For His thoughts did fairly sparkle
Like the splendid morning dew,
And lighted the minds of the children
And thrilled their young hearts anew.

Then they looked in the face of Jesus
And read a message there
That told them the true course to heaven
Was the pathway of labor and prayer.



MAKING THE WAY OF THE CROSS

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

PENITENTIAL THOUGHTS

When the Winter of Life has surrounded my
heart,

And the warm blood of youth has all fled,
I will hie to a spot in the desert apart
To think of the life I have led.

I will visit in fancy the Golgotha shrine
To winnow the gold from the dross,
And I'll open my heart to the God-man divine
Who suffered and died on the Cross.

I will watch by His tomb till the morn sets in
When Jesus arose from the dead ;
And I'll leave in His grave every vestige of sin
To which my young life has been wed.

And thus when the tears of repentance o'erflow,
And the deep pangs of sorrow depart,
My soul will be thrilled with a heavenly glow,
And God's joy will enter my heart.



A SISTER'S BEST FRIEND

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

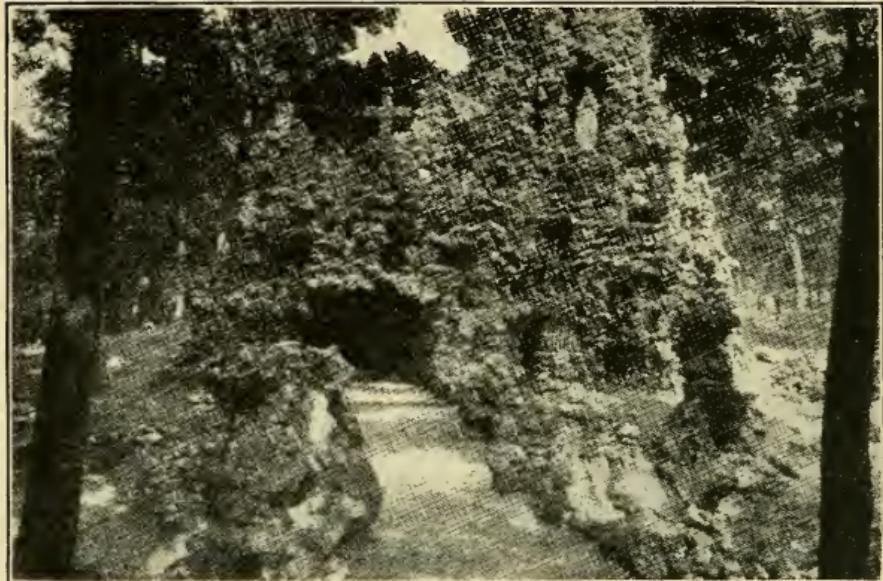
THE TEACHER'S PRAYER

I do not crave celestial fire
To kindle hearts of youth;
I only ask the gift divine
To lead my class to Truth.

To lead them through School's devious ways,
To see them grow apace
Along the path where Wisdom stands
And doles out heavenly grace.

I pray to fashion their young minds
To know and do their part;
I seek to see them drawing near
Unto the Sacred Heart.

Great Teacher, list unto my prayer!
Oh, hearken to my plea!
My very heart's desire is this:
To lead them nearer Thee.



GROTTO OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

This impressive grotto is located in the woodland of Nazareth Academy, La Grange, Ill. It is constructed entirely of Tufa Stone, and is about thirty feet high, forty-three feet wide, and twenty-two feet deep. The statue of Our Lady of Lourdes is made of Orbronze and stands six feet high. This devotional grotto contains a cave capable of accommodating twenty persons. In this cave there is an altar at which the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass can be offered. The entire grotto is lighted by electricity.

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

A WOODLAND SHRINE

At a quiet rustic shrine
Where the trees intertwine
And the fragrance of flowers fills the air,
To a lily-white queen
With a diadem of green
I once chanted a love-inspired prayer.

As I knelt there alone
On a priedieu of stone,
The songbirds were lilting a lay
With such delicate art,
That it entered the heart
Of my Mother, the Queen of the May.

In that moment of grace,
In that picturesque place,
I forgot all the cares of the day;
And my soul, like a dove,
Bore a message of love
To my Mother, the Queen of the May.



THE CALL OF DEATH

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

While serving at her humble post,
Her generous heart aflame with love,
The hand of Death like lightning came
And raised her soul to realms above.

Her master-mind no more will lead
Christ's little ones with wondrous art ;
Her voice no more will strike those chords
That vibrate in each youthful heart.

The noble deeds of her brief life
A monument sublime shall be ;
The thought of her shall give us hope
To serve our Lord more faithfully.



A JUNE SCENE

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

A DAY IN JUNE

At the break of the day,
When the birds' roundelay
Coursed along on the ambient air,
A faint sound came to me
Filled with Love's ecstasy,
Like the tone of an angelic prayer.

The low murmuring trees,
The soft hum of the bees,
And the rays of the sun's golden sheen,
In a spirit of glee,
Bore a message to me
As I rested in slumber serene.

I awoke with a sigh,
But the Sun in the sky
Called me forth into Nature's domain,
Where a vision so bright
Filled my heart with delight
And my soul with a prayerful refrain.



CALVARY (*Munkacsy*)

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

CALVARY

A tragic scene brings sadness to my heart:

Behold the Saviour stretched upon the ground!

List to the crowd and hear the hammer's sound!

The monster spikes have torn His flesh. I start,
And cry aloud, "Has Malice done its part?"

The Cross is raised. The bleeding Saviour bound

Speaks no complaining word, but looks around

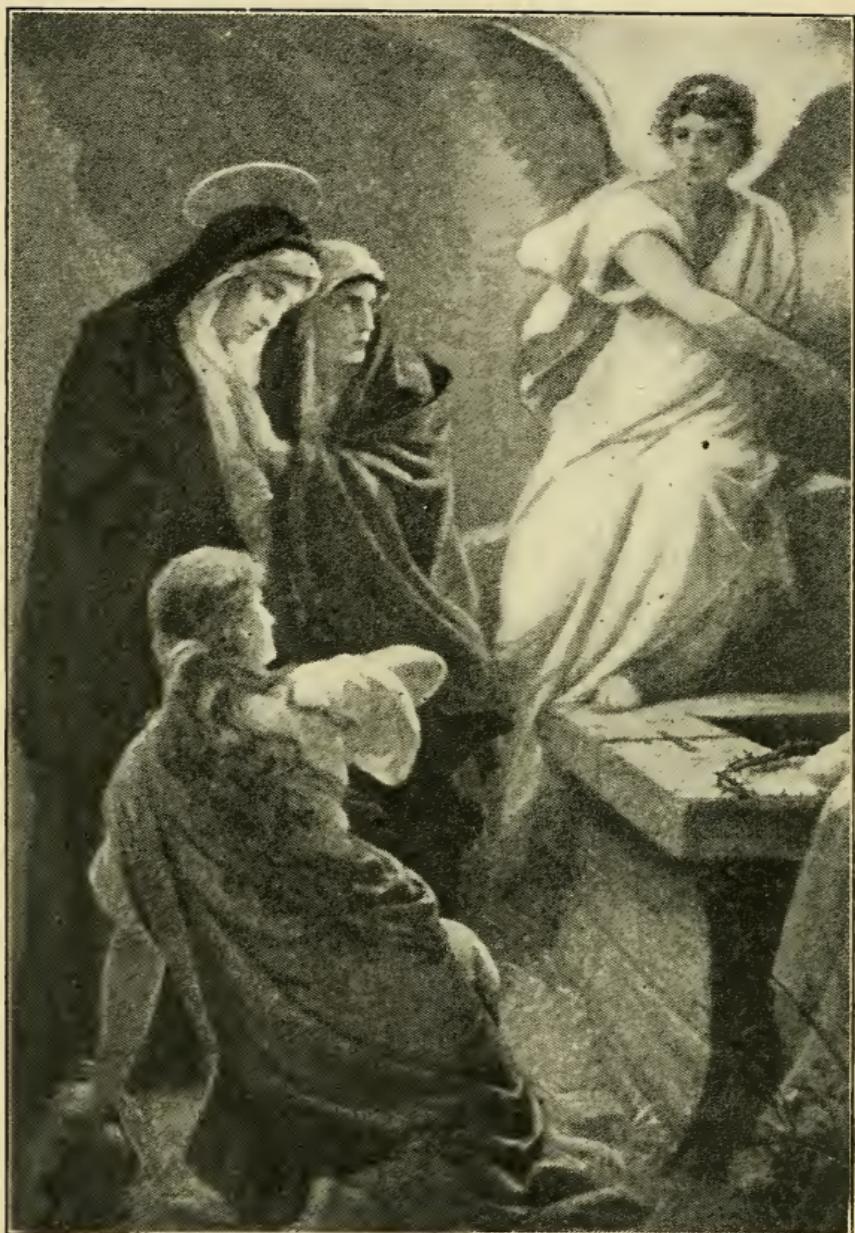
And sees the motley crowd preparing to depart.

Thrice wondrous act of love divine! You thrill
The very fibers of my inmost heart.

O deed of deeds! Give me the light to see
How wise it is to do God's holy will.

And never let my thoughts, dear Lord, de-
part

From thinking of the Cross of Calvary.



THE RESURRECTION (*Plockhorst*)

VERSES FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

SORROW CHANGES TO JOY

My heart last eve
Was wont to grieve
A most appalling mystery;
For Sorrow's gloom
Was in the tomb
Where slept the Lord in ecstasy.

So passing strange,
A lightning change
Descended on the Saviour's cell;
Where Sorrow stood
In plaintive mood
Triumphant Joy had come to dwell.

Let Music ring
Let Voices sing
In dulcet tones from shore to shore;
For Christ the Lord
With Heaven's accord
Has conquered Death forevermore.

W 13





